

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN033
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Name of Service:	Kilnaleck Playgroup
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Address of Service:	Liós na Sí, Kilnaleck, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	A82 K825
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Name of Registered Provider:	John O'Reilly
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date(s) of Inspection:	27/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan
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Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Kilnaleck Playgroup was established in 1997 and operates as a privately-owned service offering part-time pre-school care. The service caters for a maximum of 29 pre-school children and operates from 09:30 – 12:30 Monday - Friday. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme. This part-time service is conducted from purpose-built rooms to the side of a domestic dwelling on the outskirts of Kilnaleck town Co. Cavan. The service operates as 1 large area of 2 interconnecting rooms with adjoining sanitary accommodations and an office/kitchenette. The children have access to a large outdoor play area around of the premises.

Staffing

There are 4 staff employed in the service working directly with the children.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform

decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection and the registered provider.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. The deputy person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

There were 4 staff members employed in the service and the 4 staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for all 4 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 4 staff members and the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

- (d) Following a review of the staff files presented for inspection documentary evidence of international police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.
- (4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the childcare qualification for the 4 members of staff in the service met the minimum qualification required to enable them to work directly with the preschool children.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

- (1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

Compliance Information

- (1) There were an adequate number of adults present with the preschool children attending the service when the inspector arrived at the service and for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) There were 22 preschool children (aged 2 years and 9 months to 4 years) attending these rooms with 3 members of staff. The child adult ratios were correct.
- (8) The registered provider ensured that at least 2 adults were on the premises at all times.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

The service operated 1 large interconnecting preschool area consisting of the Bumble Bees to the front of the premises and the Ladybirds to the rear where the children could move freely between both rooms.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- The personal care provided met the needs of the children attending the service e.g. hands were washed, and noses wiped as necessary.
- All children were either toilet trained or being toilet trained and independent toileting was promoted for all children however assistance and supervision was given as necessary. Gentle reminders were given to encourage hand washing.
- The children's lunches were provided by the parents and were stored appropriately in the fridge on the premises until lunch time. Healthy eating was promoted in the service. The children had access to their individual drink bottles.

Supporting Relationships:

- The adults demonstrated sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for the children as evidenced in the respectful and positive use of language and kind soft tones in the care room for example "thank you very much for waiting...", "I love that colour how did you make it?" and "are you ok ?"
- The staff provided one to one support to a child having difficulty settling in while also engaging with the children in play activities and setting up activities for the children.
- Minor behavioural issues were dealt with swiftly by the staff members and not allowed to escalate e.g. "be gentle", " ... doesn't like that", "we are all friends", "sharing is caring".

- It was stated that communication with parents is generally at and drop off and pick -up and one to one parent meetings were offered to parents later in the year. Messages were also sent to parents via email and a written note.

Physical and Material Environment

- A variety of age-appropriate toys and equipment were available in both areas of the care room and were stored on low level shelving which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children.
- There were defined interest in both care rooms to include home corner, messy area with sand, a large painting easel and book area. Fine motor development equipment, push toys, small world toys, dress-up clothing and construction blocks and cars were also available

Programme Of Activities

- Evidence of long, medium and short-term planning were on display in the office/kitchenette area. A daily planning sheet was on display on the notice board.
- Artwork was on display on the windows and the staff members stated that scrapbooks were commenced for the children which would consist of art work and observations throughout the year.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There were 2 small armchairs with cushions in the Ladybird Room and a floor mat taken out for the children to sit on at story time.

(3)(a) There was a large outdoor area available to the side, front and rear of the premises. Staff reported that the front gates were always closed and a risk assessment carried out prior to the children going outside.

There were lawn areas and an artificial grass area with 2 playhouses and slides. There was a gravel area and mud kitchen down beside a large shed where there were numerous ride-on toys and a wooden shop area. An outdoor room which had a seating area to the rear of the building was reported to be used on occasion by the children. There were wooden stumps and stepping stones in the garden.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) There was no soft and comfortable area for a child to go and relax on, to take a break from activities or to lie down on if tired or unwell.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All soft furnishings were removed during covid. It was an oversight that this area had not been restored and corrected. A soft rug and cushions were purchased immediately post inspection and the soft furnished area for children to relax or take a break if unwell has been fully restored.

This area will be retained and available to children in the future as it had been pre-covid.

Supporting documentation submitted

Receipts and photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response and supporting information was reviewed by the inspectorate and the non-compliances have been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The bin in the toilets in the Bumble Bee Room was not pedal operated and children were observed to lift the lid with their hands to open. This is an infection control risk.
2. Children were observed to use a communal sink of water to wash their hands in on a number of occasions, this is a cross infection and infection control risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Three new Pedal bins were purchased immediately after inspection and have been installed in the Preschool setting including the toilet areas. All non-pedal operated bins have been removed from the service. Pedal type bins only will be utilised in the preschool setting from this point forwards.
2. Sink stoppers were removed from communal sinks in order to stop sinks being filled with water and the water being used by a number of children with a risk of cross contamination. Children now individually wash their hands under the observation/supervision of staff Sink stoppers have been removed from all sinks and hand washing is carried out on an individual basis under the supervision/observation/guidance of a staff member.

Supporting documentation submitted

Receipts and photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the registered provider's response and is satisfied that the non-compliances identified in Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-
- (a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and
 - (b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response for children, on the premises at all times.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and available to the preschool children.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) A record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service and were carried out monthly, the last recorded 29/9/24.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment dated 23/9/24 and 28/8/24 respectively.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.